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THE INDIAN EDUCATOR

MR. V. ARAVAMUDA IYENGAR, B.A., L.T., *Editor-in-Chief.*

Vol. II. MADURA—JULY, 1926 No. 7

LATE V. G. SURIANARAYA[N]
OF THE CHRISTIAN COLL[EGE]

ABOUT AND AROUND

We are glad to learn that Sir P. S. Sivaswami Iyer has endowed a princely gift of a lakh of Rupees in aid of the High School at Tirukattupalle, which has been founded and maintained by him all these years.

The Tamil University.

We are in receipt of the questionnaire sent out by the Tamil University Committee. An editorial is hardly the place for anything like a detailed reply to all the questions raised; but we make the following suggestions in the hope that they will commend themselves to those who may be in charge of the drafting of a Bill when the time comes.

The new University must provide not only for the more intense study of Tamil, but for the study of all subjects in and through Tamil. If for any reason this is felt to be not possible to start with, it should be kept in view as an ideal to be realised at a very early date, and arrangements for its realisation should be made from the first. The necessary work of translation and the production of original works must be vigorously carried on as part of the work of the new University. The work may be confined for a time to one centre like the Madura Tamil Sangam. It may, perhaps, be desirable to postpone the creation of the Tamil University till the preliminary work is done; but in cutting away earlier from Madras, the Tamil districts will be doing a service directly to Madras and indirectly to themselves. When the Madras University Act was ushered in with the fanfare of trumpets, it was hoped that a teaching residential University would spring into existence at Madras. If that hope has not been realised, the failure has been in no small measure due to its being still hampered by the affiliated colleges. A good many of these have gone out of its jurisdiction with the creation of the Andhra University. A Tamil University will further relieve the burden, and Madras will be practically free to follow its own destiny unfettered. The success or failure of Madras under such conditions cannot but be instructive even should it fail to be inspiring.

For a time the new University may confine itself to conferring Arts degrees (for practical purposes, the B.Sc. is just as good as an Arts ... ion of faculties in technolo-
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The evolution of such a type requires a professoriate which will command unquestioned obedience and confidence; and in the present degenerate condition of the teaching profession it is almost impossible to get such a professoriate. It is not merely that teachers are underpaid and overworked but that they are treated in such a fashion that they have been able to stick on very often only at the expense of their self-respect; and nobody that has lost its self-respect can command the confidence of others. A measure of reform which will enable the profession to regain its lost *morale* would thus seem to be an indispensable preliminary to any profitable attempt to create new universities. We do hope that this fundamental question will receive at the hands of Government the consideration that it deserves, and that a patch-work university will not be foisted on us with, perhaps, no justification other than political exigencies.

PAULINE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS AND SOME MODERN PROBLEMS

BY MR. N. S. VISWANATHA IYER, B.A., B.L.

Few chapters in the "Holy Bible" deserve more careful study from a cultural standpoint than those that cover the epistle of St. Paul to the Romans. The Roman Empire represented a type of culture concretised in organic institutions of the state, the main goal whereof was law and order. To be a Roman Citizen was an esteemed privilege. "Cives Romanus sum" was an expression tempting enough to attract the best minds of the day. St. Paul himself felt very legitimate pride in the privileges available under the Roman constitution.

The ancient Roman had a practical turn of mind. His philosophy was distinctly not of the visionary type. He could not afford himself vague disputations about "the unknown" and "the beyond". His life was distinctly much higher than a dull mechanical dry-as-dust life which it is the misfortune of the average citizen of so-called modern democracies to live. A calculated type of idealism in terms of the Roman state reconciled with a severe sense of the practical defined and determined the activities of the ancient Roman.

It is but natural that Christianity should appear to the Romans a vague moonshine and should

necessarily have evoked out of him a derisive contempt. Jesus on the Calvary is poles apart from Cæsar in triumphant marches. It was therefore difficult even for advanced minds like Marcus Aurelius Antonius to carve an attitude of reconciliation to the religion of the Nazarene.

St. Paul, as old Saul, persecuted Christianity, became later a servant of Jesus and felt the "new dispensation" so much that to the very Romans who scorned Christ, he gave a long interesting and thoughtful epistle.

In the very nature of things an epistle like Paul's could not be correctly understood by the Christian Theologian for he lacks the synthetic vision which it needs. To the Christian wedded to Christian theology, humanity has only two divisions, the division labelled "Christian" with heaven assured and the rest non-christian and therefore anti-christian booked for hell. An attitude that looks at the epistle of St. Paul from this standpoint is bound to lose the salutary lessons which a more catholic and synthetic type of mind is likely to derive.

The main point which St. Paul discusses in his epistle is "Shall faith make void the law"? The law is the old dispensation. The faith is what Jesus Christ has announced. An apparent conflict seems to be obvious between "the Law" and the "faith". St. Paul describes this apparent conflict in Chapters II and III of his epistle and formulates this seeming conflict in the form of a specific issue. His words are expressive of the position clearly enough:—"Do we then make void the law through faith?" St. Paul at once gives the answer "God forbid. Aye, we establish the law."

In Chapter IV, St. Paul makes out a case for the need for faith in spite of the Law. The Law, he says, worketh wrath and to be at peace with God needs His Grace. Grace is what we have access to only through 'Faith'. The closing words in Chapter V of the epistle sum up the position expressive of the relation as between Law and faith.

> 'The Law entered that the offence might abound
> But where sin abounded, Grace did much more abound'.

Chapter VI of the epistle discusses the position which arises out of the conclusions in Chapter V. The question that Paul seeks to answer is "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound". The implications in the question are clear that if more sin in the world meant more Grace of God, there should be more continuance in sin that Grace might abound. It is just this fallacy that St. Paul explains away with a keen penetrating vision. To be baptized in Christ is to be baptized in the likeness of his death as also of His resurrection. Sin has no more dominion over the man of faith in that the members of his body become instruments of righteousness unto God. His service is not in the oldness of the letter but in the newness of the spirit. He is no longer bound to the law as in his baptism he has won delivery therefrom but has to submit to a higher law—the law of God after the inward man. The fulfilment of this higher law was made possible according to St. Paul through Christ Jesus. It is not therefore a case of Faith making void the Law but one where the Law had its achievement through Christ Jesus of what could not be achieved through the weakness of the flesh. Chapters VII and VIII only pursue this line of investigation and offer materials for a keen psychological study. St. Paul seems to be conscious in these chapters that he is addressing not the unlettered peasantry but a group of people mentally disciplined already in touch with the thoughts of the age.

Chapter IX, X and XI do not seem to be very material. Chapter XII is an extremely interesting chapter. St. Paul beseeches the Romans that their bodies be presented as living sacrifices. They are apparently many but all of them form one body in Christ. Quite a long number of exhortations are given by the Saint to the Romans on the basis of this brotherhood designed for service and sacrifice. This Chapter affords considerable soothing and solace and closes with the words after the manner of the Great Gautama Buddah "Be not overcome of evil but overcome evil with Good".

In Chapter XIII St. Paul lays down what one's attitude should be to the 'Powers that be'. The ruler according to St. Paul is the minister of God —a revenger to execute wrath upon one that doeth evil. Law is fulfilled best according to St. Paul only in Love. What the saint therefore wants is that there be no provision made for the flesh to fulfil its lusts but the Romans do pin their faith to the Lord Jesus Christ in order that there be no rioting, no drunkenness, no strife, no envying &c.

In Chapter XIV St. Paul has distinctly shown his mind against doubtful disputations. He desires that no man need judge his brother man as each has to account himself to God. What counts above all is peace and righteousness and what—ever therefore makes for peace, deserves to be followed. This Chapter may well repay perusal over and over since it contains useful hints as to how people, with differing tastes, diet and faiths could be together and stand for peace.

This is the brief summing up of the epistle of the great saint and a scholarly investigation into the various Chapters reveals how in various modern day problems the great saint's word can be invoked for solution.

Modern democracy has in its essentials a number of elements akin to the ancient Roman Empire. Both are organised polities where the individual is almost extinguished in the interests of the state. Freedom in the broader sense of opportunities and facilities for individual growth and expansion is absent from both. A simpler, more direct and effective way of looking at things is what modern democracy needs just as the Roman Empire needed the same. Both are no doubt grand experiments from the stand point of "group efficiency", but both are disappointing in the sense that they do not aim at producing 'the higher Super-Man' but on the other hand have dwarfed the individual and made a fetish of the state.

A responsible mind like St. Paul's fully alive to the responsibilities and burdens of civic existence as also to the need for a simpler, less cumbrous, more direct way of viewing things is certainly and likely to command attention now as the cry everywhere is for 'self-determination'.

One of the pressing modern day problems is as regards the attitude of the Christain nations towards the non-Christian ones.

It cannot be disputed that the normal Christian honestly believes that the world reaches a mille-

nium if the kingdom of Christ covers the entire earth. The missionary activities of the European and American nations in India, China, Africa, are founded upon pious intentions of this kind. Could it be said that the Missionary evangelist means by 'the kingdom of Christ on earth' earth 'being purged of rioting, drunkenness, chambering, wantonness, strife and envying, as the evangelist, St. Paul, meant in Chapter 13 of his epistle? The modern missionary enterprise looks more Roman than Christian and it functions to civilize certainly not to christianise in the Pauline sense of the term.

The Epistle if carefully digested is bound to create an inward searching of hearts amongst European nations and the healthy consequence is certain to follow that with less rioting, drunkenness, envying &c., amongst them, the chances of the world's peace being made more certain are much greater.

Secondly, if the European nations are in vital touch with the Epistle, in their dealings with other races they are likely to be far less supercilious than they are now, as in the words of St. Paul each has to account himself to God and no man therefore need be anxious to judge his brother.

Thirdly, an attitude of tolerance is bound to prevail on the part of the Christian towards other faiths than Christianity. The Pauline attitude is not to 'explode the law'. St. Paul discovered in the New dispensation of Jesus the fulfilment of 'the higher Law' of the 'inward mind'. This latter law, once dominant is kindled into activity by Jesus and all activities do, in the newness of the Spirit, function in service and sacrifice. The instruments that act become verily the instruments of righteousness unto God. This ideal of linking one's activity with God's is more or less the view point of the great religions of the world. Religious feuds and wars have been but the outward expression in force of the activities of frenzied disputants that missed this view-point. It is just this that is accentuated in the Bhagavad Gita. A cultural attitude carved after the Gita is nearer the Pauline attitude towards Christian life than what the missionary strains himself for in his efforts at gathering adherents for Christ's fold.

Fourthly, apart from the effects in general as set forth above, to the Indian Christian, the epistle of St. Paul has a special value. He has chosen to profess a religion different form that of his fathers and apparently a gap does arise as between him and his environments which it is his duty and privilege to bridge up the Christian life which the Pauline Epistle insists on—a life of self-restraint with freedom from rioting, drunkenness, chambering, wantonness, strife and envying. To the Indian bred up in Sanathana culture what counts in life is discipline and restraint rather than 'faith'. Faith is well only if the life to which it is linked is made well by it. The Indian Christian has not sufficiently realised this aspect of the Pauline Christianity. A keener realization of the need for closer study of the Epistle of St. Paul is likely to do the Indian Christian much good, in that it is likely to furnish him with solutions as to how he could make himself comfortable and useful amidst non-christian environments.

Modern democracy has crushed 'the individual'. The Roman Empire worked out just the same tragical experiment in Ancient history. The religion of Jesus was a challenge to Rome in ancient days. Why should it not be that the Indian Christian is a challenge to the Bureaucracy now? The root principle in Christianity is that every individual has distinct worth before God! Man-made institutions have mercilessly crushed the 'Individual' and substituted brute-groups efficient in their mechanical organization and discipline. Would it be too much to expect of the Indian Christian a courage and an enthusiasm necessary for building up an Indian Polity where the worth of the Individual shall not be neglected but understood, and appreciated that the group might show the individual better and more perfect and the perfection of the 'Individual' the group might work out its own perfection?

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THE TEACHER IN SPIRITUAL LIFE

By Mr. P. V. Aghoram Iyer, B.A., B.L.

1. The need for a teacher to help one in one's spiritual aspiration is universally acknowledged. There is a universal belief in the power of the teacher. All religions have brought into existence the institution of the teacher. In India where religion is the key note of the national life, we have institutionalised the teacher better than elsewhere. There is hardly any branch of traditional knowledge, sacred or secular, in which, the inmost secrets are transmitted to the disciple without the living contact with the teacher. Even acts and crafts are learned at the feet of the teacher. The relationship of teacher and taught is one of the most inexpressibly precious to Indian mind. In orthodox conception, the teacher whatever his branch of knowledge, lays his hand on the disciple's head. The latter is blessed, as it were, and the secret is passed from the teacher to the taught. It is in the fitness of things, that in spiritual life, where the average man's power to help himself in the hour of trial is very small the institution of the teacher has almost come to stay.

2. The conception though good at the beginning, has suffered the deterioriation and decay common to all things in life. In an age of growing unbelief and spiritual feebleness, we are noticing a caricature of the great institution. The teacher is everywhere as the disciple is. The good teacher is rare as the good disciple is. But it is unfortunate that the bad teacher alone comes in for a large share of criticism. Disciples and non-disciples alike scrutinise the worth and character of the teacher. They pit the average bad teacher against the type of his community and finding him wanting, they run him down. It is very natural for men who are unwilling and unable to help themselves, but

would lean helplessly on any other, God or Teacher as the case may be, to express their feeling of dissatisfaction with the teacher whose help they sought and from whom they turned back in disappointment. But what right have men to expect such help from outside, if they would do nothing themselves? I am pointiug out the phenomenon only to show how a good deal of the criticism that is made of the teacher results from our mental sluggishness and weakness of will. Men always want to lay the blame on others. It is quite true that a good many who masquerade as teachers disgrace their noble occupation. They take incr.dulous and simple minded people. Are there not snares and pitfalls in every business? Why should this particular business be judged by an impossible standard?

3. The qualifications laid down in the Hindu scriptures to entitle one to be a teacher in religion are so high that in any age we may not have a sprinkling of men. The teacher must be a man of self-realisation. He must have no ulterior motive in teaching. He must have no love of name and game. He must have perfected himself by his self-discipline. Short of this, no one is competent to help another in the struggle for light. He who does it without possessing the qualifications injures himself and injures his disciples. Any such teacher who desires to guide others in religion is like the blind leading the blind, both falling into the ditch. There are scores of teachers and hundreds of disciples all over the land who play this dangerous game. Almost every reform-society teems with these groups of men. Any powerful man, who has a bit of will and has made some kind of excursion into scriptures, and adds something of miracle and mystery to his teaching, becomes the nucleus of a religious body. He even promulgates a doctrine for himself. It is given out as quite novel and original teaching and the future of the race is said to be intimately bound up with its spread among men. Every fad travels fast in these days and people who begin to believe in it and come to swear by it, grow more and more as the days pass. Cheap printing and the power of the press have made possible its advertisement in society, and the average man's judgment of values has become so poor that a doctrine has a chance among men in so far as it tickles them and justifies their acts and sayings.

4. Though the spurious variety is thus overshadowing the earth, the good teacher and the good disciple have not died out altogether. "The seeking sinner meeteth the seeking Saviour" says the Bible. Though a good teacher may not be found, there is no excuse for us in not growing into good disciples. We may owe no allegiance to any man. But there are rules of life which are universally acknowledged as good, and we don't follow them because we love pleasure too much and don't cultivate the will at all. How could we become good disciples if we violated these rules? We must rid our minds of the belief that without our doing anything, the teacher will set us free. Even the good teacher may not do it for us; can he who merely makes the claim and cannot prove it by his worth do it for us? Is there such a royal road to God or spirituality? Is the attainment of truth like waking up a girl in her sleep and telling her "look here! your husband has come!?" Would it do for us to be idly praising the teacher or God? What avails mere words, when deeds don't back them up?

5. Whether the teacher we want came to us or not, why shouldn't we be making our moments useful to ourselves, by the thoughts we think and the good deeds we do? Why should we hug the illusion that the teacher is he who lifts us from the slough, even though we may drag him down? I should think that men who are serious-minded cannot have a better occupation for themselves, than to turn their moments into hours of self-tuition and self-culture. In the absence of the ideal and good teacher, who may show us the way, let us, with the light within us, guide ourselves. Let us call to our aid the good deeds done by our worthy forefathers, which history has recorded. When trials overtake us and the will fails us, and we are about to plunge headlong into chaos, let us go into ourselves and try to wake up the spirit within, and with his aid, prevent the ruin which threatens us. As has been well-said by Schopenhaur "It is difficult for a man to find happiness within himself; but it is impossible to find it outside." I must hurt myself a great deal, if I let my moments pass idly, and did nothing to strengthen my moral fibre or develop my spiritual will, while incident and circumstance in life were beckoning me on to try and do it. Is it not true, that if the internal teacher has not opened his eyes, all external teaching will be vain? To the good disciple does not the whole universe teach? Why then make too much of the teacher in flesh and blood?

6. We may be made or marred by the teacher whom we seek. Hinduism has exalted the position of the teacher. But it has also secured the freedom of the individual soul to choose its own path. It warns us against our taking things on trust. It warns us against our surrendering ourselves without reflection and thought to the will and judgment of another, however high his merits may be. It asks us to test the truth of things by the severest scrutiny There is no other religion * which invites us to experience accessible truth in preference to acceptance of revealed truth. A faith like this, certainly cannot make a fetish of the institution of the teacher. Rightly therefore, does Hinduism say "Even the faults of a teacher must be told.' There ave been instances in our history of wrangling between the teacher and the taught, where the view points of both differed. The greatest example of it is the difference Ramanuja had with his master. In the relation of the teacher and the taught, the disciple has to guard against imbibing the prejudices of the teacher. It is no homage done to the teacher if the disciple should copy the mental peculiarities of the teacher,——a mistake so commonly made by most disciples.

7. There is a ferment in the brains of most men to-day that they are agitated to think that they must signalise their lives by some service done in the cause of their faith. Institutions meant for the bettering of man have sprung up from all quarters. There are more of them than we can successfully work and get lasting results from. But we have not succeeded in waking men with the rapidity with which we have developed institutions. As institutions, they cannot run on without finance. In course of time they are run as business propositions, and the men in charge of them, leave behind them the performance of the chief function for which they were brought into existence, and have no end of trouble to reach the credit side of their account-books. Thus institutions which were designed

to mould man, have almost always grown on his ruin. It is time we began to think more of building men than institutions. The time that is devoted to fault-finding of the teacher had better be devoted to the struggle we may usefully carry on with our baser nature. Each one who is in search of the holy grail, had better assume, when he enters on the field of battle, that all the world is against him, and that he is to avoid being overwhelmed, by all the will he can exert and all the work he can do. The race is really only to the strong.

*Some of our readers may demur to the emphatic views of the writer. Ed. *I E.*

THE VAISNAVA ALVARS—II

THE FIRST ALVARS.

By Mr. K. G. Sesha Iyer, B.A., B.L.,
Retired High Court Judge, Trivandrum.

Though Nam Alvar stands first in importance among the Vaisnava Saints, he was not the first in point of date. According to the hagiologists, the earliest among the Alvars are Poygai Alvar, Bhutattalvar and Pey Alvar. These three are said to have been born in the same month of the same year, the first being just a day older than the second, and the second just a day older than the third. All the three of them are Brahmanas. Poygai Alvar or Saro Yogin was born in Kanchipuram, Bhutattalvar or Bhuta Yogin in Mahabalipuram, and Pey Alvar or Bhranta Yogin in Mailapur, Madras. Tradition assigns to them an impossible date—4202 B.C.; and though that date can be summarily dismissed, it is not easy, from the materials now available, to say when exactly they lived. From the fact that Bhuta Yogin was born in Mahabalipuram, it has been suggested that these saints cannot have been anterior to the 7th century after Christ, because in the view of Prof. Jonveau Dubreuil Mahabalipuram did not probably exist before the time of Narasimha Varma I. The reasoning is obviously inconclusive, and is a good instance of the fallacy of *ignotum per ignotius*. Dr. S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar is of the opinion that the *mutal alvars* should be placed in the second century of the Christian era; and this view he bases on an examination of early Tamil literature. We know that a poet of the name of Poigaiyar composed *Kaluvali-Narpatu* in honour of Ko. Cenkannan, the well known Cola King of the Sangam period; and he has also contributed lyrics to the *Purananuru* collection. If Poygai Alvar and Poygaiyar be the same, then the first alvars should be placed about the close of the Sangam period; and it has always seemed to me that the most probable date of the Sangam period in Tamil literary history is about the 2nd century A.C.

Tradition says that these three Alvars happened to meet one another one night at Tiru-Koilur. It was a night of angry storm and pelting rain. Poygai Alwar who came to the place first found shelter in a small cottage where there was just enough accommodation for one to lie down. Then came Bhuta Yogin who also sought shelter in the same cottage; and when he was told that there was space for only one to lie down, he replied that two could then sit and entered the hut. Shortly after, Pey Alwar arrived and sought admission; and on hearing that there was sitting room for only two persons, he said that if so three could stand, and he also entered the cottage. This chance meeting of the three kindred souls proved to be a turning point in their lives. Does not the gloom of night hold in its womb the light of dawn, and is not the roaring storm the harbinger of peace? And on this stormy night, across the rainy gloom, even the Lord of light entered the humble cottage in silence, and with the magic touch of his golden feet freed their souls from darkness. A new flood of light illumined their souls, and they burst into praise of the Lord who had vouchsafed to them His beatific and glorious vision. The songs that flowed from their inspired lips are said to be embodied in the section of the *Nalayara-prabhandam* known as *Iyarpa*. Each of them has contributed a hundred verses, that go by the collective name of *Tiru-Antati*. Poygai Alvar begins by defining God as represented in His manifested universe; Bhutattalvar begins his verses by regarding the Supreme as Narayana, and Pey Alvar begins his *Tiru-Antati* by conceiving the Lord as associated with Sri or Sakti. Here are these three verses. Says Poygai Alvar:—

With the earth as the receptacle to hold the oil,
The girdling ocean as the *ghi* for the lamp,
And the resplendent sun as the kindled light,
I lit my lamp to see the beauteous Feet
Of Him that on the shining sea recumbent lies,
And there I placed the garland of song I wove
In glorification of the Lord,
That I from the sea of bondage might be saved!
1st Tiru Antati 1.

Bhutattalvar writes:—

With love as the receptacle, with yarning as the *ghi*,
And a melting heart as the wick, in ecstacy
Of soul I lit the lamp of wisdom and glorified
Narayana in Tamil verses meetly tried.
2nd Tiru Antati 1.

Pey Alvar says:—

Lakshmi I saw! I saw the golden form!
The glorious hues of the effulgent sun!
I saw the mighty golden discus and the friendly couch!
All this I saw in Him that bears the ocean's hue!
3rd Tiru Antati 1.

The distinctive conception of the Deity and the realization of the Divine Presence according to each of these Alvars may to some extent be appreciated from the above verses. Here are a few others taken at random from their songs which will help us in the same direction.

O cease from doubt, for thou hast seen the Lord!
Know thou the solid earth, th' expansive sky,
The air, the sounding sea, the glowing fire
Are all the lotus-eyed Lord Visnu, who
Of yore the small-eyed elephant did save
When in distress it cried to Him for help.
1st Tiru Antati 29.

The mind, from obscuration purified, which knows the truth
Yearns for and joins with glee the saving Feet
Of Him who wears the *tulsi* garland cool,
E'en as the calf seeks naturally its dam.
1st Tiru Antati 30.

Awake I saw Narayana by day!
In sooth I saw Him in my dream again!
At all times oft I saw the glorious form.
Of Him who in His hand the gleaming discus holds,
Whose beauteous feet with heavenly splendour shines!
2nd Tiru Antati 81.

I care not for the kingship of the earth!
Nor would I be the king of *devas* in heaven itself!

For now I have as humble devotee
Sought out the Supreme Lord with lotus eyes,
Lord Visnu, our Lord of Lords, and worshipped
Him! 2nd Tiru Antati 90.
In body and in mind I did a slave become
To Him who in the dark-blue ocean doth
reside,
E'en Him who on His breast as lustrous jewels wears
Lakshmi, the flower-born goddess with the
coral lips,
And gleaming garlands richly dight with precious stones! 3rd Tiru Antati 37.
The way to live I've learnt! for I have gained
The feet of Him, our Lord, the lotus-eyed
Visnu of dazzling splendour, on whose breast
Where Sri resides the garland sweet descends,
Like a long-lying waterfall that runs
Adown a cleft o'er a dark mountain side.
3rd Tiru Antati 59.

SCOTLAND THROUGH EASTERN EYES

Some Impressions of Scotch Social Life.

By Dr. Eddy Asirvatham, B.A., B.D., Ph.D. (Edin.)

To describe the social life of a foreign people must always be a difficult task. It is a truism to say that one may spend a considerable part of one's thinking life in a foreign land, acquaint oneself thoroughly with the peculiar ways and manners of the people there, and make a strenuous effort to understand the subtleties of their thought and intricacies of their feeling, and yet be a stranger to their true genius. The soul of a people, to use a questionable expression, to denote, however, an idea which is quite real, is not something that can be analysed and tabulated. It is something that evades all definition or description. It can only be experienced and perhaps dimly apprehended. What the outsider sees in the life of a people is often only vague symbols and unmeaning customs and manners. Happy is the man who grasps their inner meaning and comprehends their real significance! The best we can do as outsiders is merely to state certain first impressions and let them pass for what they are worth.

Like many visitors to Scotland, the present writer came with the expectation of finding a stern, sober, and, in some ways, a rugged people, to whom life was a tremendously serious thing, relieved only by a constant exploration into the realms of metaphysics and theology! But soon after he set his feet on the soil of Scotland and entered into a railway compartment, occupied by some Scotch lads and lasses returning from a football match, he was mildly surprised to find that these young people, instead of attempting to solve the inscrutable riddles of the universe, which have puzzled their forefathers before them, contented themselves with all the latest information they could get of sports and horse races and with heart-to-heart talks! The way in which they carried on their conversation did not seem to suggest that they were at great pains to express the noblest sentiments they could utter in the most beautiful and chaste language possible. Their conversation flowed on in an easy and natural manner, abundantly interspersed with words and phrases, which in print are seen only in the form of periods or dashes, swear words and phrases but yet which, because, perhaps, of man's original sin and the perversity of his nature, are determined to find vocal expression whenever they can get an opportunity! This first experience awoke one to the consciousness that the Scotch people were after all just as human as people anywhere else in the world and that, though the Shorter Catechism and all that it stood for, to a greater or less extent, determined their thought life, such ordinary things as work, love, play, and enjoyment were their vital concerns.

When the train arrived in Edinburgh and the young men in our compartment trooped out after the lasses had got down, one expected to see these strong, stalwart men, descendants of a race of rugged and manly ancestors, walk with their own strength, without requiring the help of an outside agency. But, instead of that, they all sought the assistance of a third leg, a wooden one, popularly called a walking-stick. Though some of our Scotch antiquarian friends have explained to us the origin of the walking-stick and its concomitant, a pair of loose gloves, we fail to see whether they serve any real purpose in life. To say this is perhaps to lay ourselves open to the charge of being vulgar Utilitarians! The walking-stick and the pair of loose gloves possibly have artistic value. Perhaps they give the hands something to do and thus keep them out of mischief. But to an outsider who is not accustomed to such niceties, they spell a little of effeminacy!

Another popular opinion which the present writer brought with him regarding the Scotch people was that they were very thrifty, to the point of being close-fisted. What he finds now is that, if they are thrifty, they are thrifty with a reason. The genuine hospitality which they show to outsiders, once they are shaken out of their naturally cold and somewhat frigid disposition, and the sincerity and eagerness with which they take up all causes which make for good, cannot but attract one's attention. Even among those who are thrifty, not necessarily inspired by a high purpose, miserliness is not so common as rumour will have it. Otherwise, how can we account for the extreme popularity of the drinking saloon, especially on Saturday nights after week's wages are in; or for the amount of money that is wasted on smoking, as though there was not enough smoke already without it? If it is true that the Scotch are very loath to part with their pennies, how does the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh survive, or how do the innumerable organ grinders, street-singers, pavement-artists, and other kinds of beggars in whom cities like Glasgow and Edinburgh abound, manage to earn a living? These are a few questions worthy of reflection before we label the Scotch or, for that matter, any other people with some catchword. The Scotch certainly are not such great consumers of porridge as popular opinion leads us to believe!

Scotch family life is really one worthy of our greatest respect and admiration. Two things which strike a friendly visitor are the kindly disciple of the home and the thorough and well-rounded training given in public schools. We have so often heard it said that the West is materialistic and the East spiritual that we have almost come to believe it as ture. But to one who knows the silent sacrifice made by fathers and mothers for the education and general well-being of their children, and the sincere love and gratitude shown by children to parents, it sounds hollow to say that the West is all materialistic

and that human values do not count for much. It may be true that materialism is the prevailing tone of the commercial life of the West. But yet that there are many in these Western countries to whom life does not begin and end with the abundance of things they possess, cannot be denied.

(to be continued)

THE PUBLIC EXAMINATION

(An examination of its rationale and morale.)

BY RADICAL.

History has absolutely no record of any age or clime where examinations on such Saurian and Silurian scale, *to no purpose* and through the medium of an ill-understood, hence misunderstood foreign tongue, dominated the educational system, and sapped the life of the rising and growing generation of a class of people aspiring to be, and hence unchallengedly accepted as leaders of social opinion and social advance, as in 'educated India' of to-day;—even as there is no historic parallel of a handful of foreigners dominating the life of a people numbering more than 300 millions and living more than 7,000 miles away. It easily strikes the thinking mind that the two facts are but symptoms of the same disease in the national body. The public examination is the pupil's bug-bear, the teacher's nightmare, the anxious parents' care, the fool's pretty snare, the examiner's feast, the examinee's shrift. It is assuredly a modern growth on civilized society—parasitic or epiphytic it is for scholars to tell.

And all what for? Is the game worth the candle? It is said to be a passport to a coveted job. If it be so, it were certainly good: but is it? Many secure the passfort, but few the job, and fewer directly. It is quite unbusiness like—to say the least—for all concerned to clamour for a passport and set a price on it not knowing where it will help to take you. Would we not be acting more like rational beings, and less like a panic-stricken hypnotised herd, to hold the job in view and ready to be delivered before entering into negotiations? We don't discuss the price of buffaloes lying under water with their horn alone sticking out above. Are our public examinations worth less? It is time we take our courage in both our hands and proclaim from house-tops to all concerned that our public examinations are a culpable waste of public funds fallen by mischance into incompetent hands, who have no business to set about examining people unless they have the goods ready to deliver and mean also to deliver it.

Less difficulty need be made of the matter if we definitely make up our minds to hold these same passports as ornamental and civilized luxuries of modern life, and the few who have the fancy and the means alone should choose to go in for them. But it is a vital question—who is to pay the piper? Certainly he who called the tune. He who has a job at his disposal has every right to examine my fitness for the same, if I be a candidate, and, satisfy himself in all possible ways, but *at his cost*. I am naturally the last person to have any misgivings in the matter, and all the help I can give him is to submit to his examination. To ask me to pay for it is to ask the beggar at your gate to throw a bit to your dog for letting him stand there unmolested till—say, he is tired enough to seek anothe door.

And then the demoralization of it all! The secrecy, the espionage, the ingenuity and the cost (almost military) of keeping the secret, the outvieing ingenuity (worthy of a better) cause of the attempts to pry into it prematurely; the training in selfishness, jealousy and mutual mistrust, the punishment of the innocent many, the secretly triumphant escape of the guilty few; he cramming, the coaching, the tutoring—worse than in police-courts;—the silly malpractices artificially magnified and invested with all the sweetness of forbidden fruits; the midnight oil, the broken health, the broken heart and the ruined fortune in failure; the loss of all capacity to enjoy the fruits of victory when at last it is yours, (what a Pyrrhic, or shall I say Yudhishtiraic, victory!); the very delicate index of all large scale rottenness—the not rare suicides; the conceit, the dogmatism, the slavish desire to conform because it is paying, the supercilious contempt for all outside the clique; the tendency to ape what is ill understood, originating in a desire to deceive others, but ending in self-deception; the fool's paradise, the splendid or squalid isolation, estrangement and unreality of a successful life;—bah! one is driven to the conclusion of despair that a healthy examination must be a contradiction in terms! Mind you, I do not mean to say, this tragedy occurs all on one side: it does infect all concerned—teachers, professors, examiners, conductors, superintendents, peons, valuers— perhaps these more than the examinees whose minds are often young and plastic and passively receive and store up for future guidance the models set by their betters;—the trail of the serpent is over them all! It is difficult for a sensitive soul to have lot or part in the business. No wonder all originality is killed in the manufactured product!

Even as an intellectual test, the public examination is admittedly a crude, clumsy, unreliable and withal disproportionately costly test. "No thing worth proving can be either proved or disproved." No question is worth putting or answering which admits of only one way of putting or answering it. Our courts of law have understood this quite well and conduct all their examinations *orally* and also provide for cross-examination and re-examination. But a printed question paper exacting a written answer cannot but be stiff in every sense. You can't say "Beg your pardon" to a printed sheet of paper; nor can it afford any variants like "I mean," "It so," "But then" etc. It can put the question only in one way and expect only one answer,—the orthodox answer, or worse, that of the examiner's doxy. Few examiners have the tolerance and few exminees the daring for risking on anything outside the examiner's way of thinking. Look at the regular run among candidates for question papers set in the institution to which the examiner happens to belong, and for the notes of lessons dictated and the text books approved by him; and at the enquiries, worthy of the C.I.D., set on foot for ascertaining his pet theories and aversions, partialities and prejudices. Examiners are naturally tempted to magnify the importance of what they were at great pains to learn in their school days, even as the mother-in-law thinks the world will come to an end if the daughter-in-law fails to conform to the habits and ettiquette of the older generation in all details however obsolete. The pedagogic conscience of an examiner recently was sorely exercised because many candidates had not heard of such an elementary thing as Davy's Safety Lamp.

Perhaps he would be shocked to learn that the Lamp has now become obsolete even 'At Home' and that the percentage of budding coal miners, Keir-Hardies and antiquarians among his candidates in India was most probably nil. A case was recently reported where several copies of a pupil's answer-book in the exact science of Geometry were simultaneously valued by different hands with results ranging from 80% to 20% of the total marks. The questions are almost always chosen from a set lot; the orthodox answers are also found in books or notes of lessons in a corresponding lot. How easy to get a pass if you have stomach to get by heart the whole lot! How easy to fail if you neglect! No one can guarantee that all who pass have understood their own written answers, say, in Philosophy or Literature. They may very likely flounder at the very next question suggested by the context, were it to be put orally and off-hand. Nor can you be sure that examiners have always grasped the full implication of each and every question put by them. Nor can you say that all who fail are deficient in intellect, seeing that the candidate has to get through several subjects, sometimes at once. It is only mediocre minds of flexible and lukewarm interest that get a quick and easy pass. Stronger and deeper minds, bent in a definite direction, often fail.

(To be continued)

STORIES FROM BRIHAT-KATHA NO. 2 THE WORSHIPPER OF THE SHADOW

By Mr. K. Krishnamacharya, B.A., L.T., Kamalapuram

In the country of Karnata, there lived a merchant, Malayamali. Once he happened to see Induyasas, the beautiful daughter of King Induke'sara. He fell in love with her, but knew that she was unapproachable. So, he went to a painter and had her portrait drawn by him on a plank of wood. With the portrait he retired to a secluded place, and determined to spend his days in sweet thoughts of his love.

Day by day his thoughts grew round the portrait, so much so that he at times felt that his love was there with him, in flesh and blood. He would indulge in words of love, and would very often believe that he was engaging her in a lively conversation.

One pleasant night, when the full moon was high up in the heavens, he placed the portrait at the foot of a tree, and went out to gather flowers for his love. A friend, Vinayadyuti by name, pitied his poor plight, and wanted to rescue him out of his madness. He just came in, drew a snake by the side of the princess in the portrait, and hid himself behind the tree.

When Malayamali came back with the flowers, he was horrified to see a terrible snake by the side of his Induyas as. He thought that she was bitten by the snake, and was dead. He wept aloud, tore his hair and prepared to throw him self down from the high branches of the tree and thus put an end to his life. At the right moment, he was caught unawares in the hands of his friend Vinayadyuti, who reminded him of his false fears. His madness having thus been dispelled, he saw and realised the foolishness of his day dreams.

The concentration practised on the shadow was then gradually turned on to the Supreme. Being, and Malayamali became in the course of a few years one of the great *siddhas* of the day.

INDIA AS KNOWN TO EARLY GREEKS AND ROMANS

(Continued from the May issue).

By Prof. N. Rengaswami, M.A., Mrs. A. V. N. College, Vizagapatam.

Ktesias's references to the human species in India take us to the realm of romance. He speaks of 'a race of pygmies' one cubit and a half in height clothing themselves with their long hair, and hunting hares and foxes not with dogs but with ravens, kites and vultures. Another race of men were the 'Kunokephaloi' (*Sk* 'Sunakapala') to 'Swamukha', dog-faced men, not using articulate speech, but barking like dogs, and yet are understood by each other in conversation'. (These sentiments are not far removed from what are ordinarily expressed among the Telugus about the 'Aravavallu' whose loud '*ekantams*' have become proverbial for them). 'But like all other Indians they are extremely just men'. A sobrer statement is this:—'People are swarthy not by exposure to the sun, but by nature; for among the Indians there are both men and women who are as fair as any in the world, though such are no doubt in a minority. 'The Indians are not afflicted with headache or toothache, or opthalmia, nor have they mouthsores or ulcers in any part of their body; the age to which they live is 120 to 150 years, though the very old live to 200'. According to Prof. Bevan of Oxford, "The influence of Ktesias confirmed for ever in the west the idea that India was a land where nothing was impossible—a land of nightmare monsters and strange poisons, of gold and gems. From his description of the people of India as 'very just', we may perhaps gather the impression made upon strangers by a social system so firmly governed in its complex structure and the working of its parts by tradtional law." In spite of its odious vagaries, the Indika of Ktesias was the only systematic account of India the Greeks possessed till the time of the Macedonian invasion of 327 B.C.

The work of Ktesias was of no practical help to Alexander and his men in their progress through unknown lands east of Susa. He tried to explore the country for himself by sending out reconnoitrers in advance; his intelligence department was the most efficient of the kind. He brought with him a number of scientific and literary men who could wield with equal ease the pen or the sword; the most notable of them being Nearchos of Crete, Onesikritos of Aegina. Aristobulus of Chalcidice, Callisthenes of Olynthus and others. Though all their works are mostly lost, their substance is to be found in the writings of Strabo, Pliny and Curtius. The great philosopher, Aristotle of Stagira, whose some time pupil was Alexander, missed a golden chance by not following the conqueror to the east, but he lived long enough to embody the experiences of his countrymen in his 'Natural History'. Clitarchus of Colophon was another contemporary writer whose history, rather romance, of Alexander was most popular in his time, and Curtins closely follows him in style and form.

The doings of Alexander between Kabul and the Indus were marked by a new zest and exciting adventure. The name 'Nysa' of a city near Jalalabad awoke in the minds of Greeks memories of their favourite Bacchic god Dionysus, for his mythical birth-place was Mt. Nysa. A hill named 'Meros' (Gr. thigh) hard by assured them it was there Dionysus was born from the thigh of Zeus.

Creepers of ivy, the god's favourite ornament, covered the slopes of this hill. What further confirmation could they have of the victorious progress of Dionysus in these realms in the beginning of the world? What further encouragement could Alexander have in his onward march? Strabo tells us that Alexander doubted for a time the Indus might be the same river as the Nile on whose banks Dionysus was fabled to have been born. King Ambhi of Takshasila entertained Alexander and all his host on a gorgeous pompous scale. The strange customs of the Taxilans attracted the notice of the Greeks. Poor parents exhibited their daughters for sale in the market-place; the dead were thrown out to be devoured by vultures; Sati was prevalent. In all the 3,000 miles and more of territory Alexander had passed through, the tallest and bravest fighting men he met with were the soldiers of Porus, King of the Jhelum, with his battle-front protected by a castle-line of elephants. The battle of the Jhelum was the toughest he had yet experienced. The voluminous rivers in floods facing him one after another in quick succession, braving their enterprise and exhausting their patience, seemed to be so many moats dug out by nature to protect the country in the rear. Nature seemed to them to have created everything here on a mightier scale than elsewhere. When Alexander heard of the third river he had to tackle the 'Chandrabhage' (Chenab), he and his followers discovered an evil omen in the name on account of its sounding near to their own word 'Androphagos' or 'Alexandrophagos' (devourer of Alexander); they preferred to call it by its more ancient Vedic name 'Asikne', 'Akesines' (dark-coloured). The Greek names for the rivers of the Panjab prove to us that their old Vedic names were then in use:—

'Indus' for 'Sindhu'
'Bidaspes' for 'Vitasta' (wide-spread)
'Akesines' for 'Asikne'
'Sandabal' for 'Chandrabhaga'
'Rhonedis' for 'Airavati' (Ravi)
'Bibasis' for 'Vipasa' (Beas)
'Zaradros' for 'Satadru' (Satlaj).

On the banks of Vipasa Alexander's army learnt that there was a desert of eleven days crossing ahead of them, then was a land of mightier rivers with larger and more numerous tributaries than those of the Indus, and that the King of the Gangaridai possessed 4,000 elephants well-trained and equipped for war. This nigh broke their hearts. The homesick men went on strike. But Alexander's plan was nobler pitched. He was an explorer more than a conqueror. After the conquest of the Gangetic basin he would send down the river a fleet of sails to the sea and commission a second Nearchos to make a coastal voyage round unknown Scythia, hoping himself to meet him on the shores of the Caspian. He had no knowledge of the protrusion of Malay to very near the Equator and the broad-lying lands of China and Siberia which would have landed the sailor in eternal snows. His ambition was not to be fulfilled. He had to be content, on the other hand, with the exploration of the coast from the Indus to the Persian Gulf and of the Gedrosian coastal route along which he led back his army to Babylon.

Another strange experience the Greeks had at Taxila was with two Indian ascetics, Kalamos and Dandamis, whose classic legend has been the pet theme of many an ancient writer. The two had a number of disciples; at the market-place men came to them for counsel; sesame oil was poured over them, 'so that it ran down even from their eyes'; they made in the open their own cakes of honey and sesame; (many a bairagi does it even now). Kalamos was seen once lying on his back, exposed to sun and rain; and the other Dandamis stood on his right and left leg alternately for a whole day, holding up a staff 6 feet long in both his hands. Alexander invited them both to his table. Kalamos responded to the royal wish, became one of his retinue and followed him to the west; while Dandamis, like Diogenes of the west, was proof to courtly temptation. In the unbroken chain of Indian asceticism, how many Dandamises has this land produced? Is Mahatma Gandhi one of the line sacerdotal? Is the unchanging east really changing?

(To be continued.)

THE DRAMATIC MONOLOQUE

(Concluded from the June issue.)

BY MR. G. GOPALAKRISHNA IYER, M.A.
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It is this feature of the dramatic monologue that Professor Johnson notices in his following description of it. "In the dramatic monologue the presence of a silent second person is supposed, to whom the arguments of the speaker are addressed. It is obvious that the Dramatic Monologue gains over the Soliloquy, in that it allows the artist greater room in which to work out his conceptions of character. The thoughts of a man in self-communion are apt to run in a certain circle, and to assume a monotony." After quoting the above words of Professor Johnson, Dr. Berdoe remarks: "This supposed second person serves "to draw out" the speaker and to stimulate the imagination of the reader. *Bishop Blougram's Apology* is an admirable example of this form of literature, where Mr. Gigadibs, the critic of Bishop Blougram, is the silent second person above referred to." This description of the dramatic monologue, that in it the presence of a second silent person is supposed, who "draws out" the speaker and to whom the arguments of the speaker are addressed, is not comprehensive enough. It is, indeed, a true description of some of the best of Browning's monologues viz. *Bishop Blougram's Apology*, *Cleon* and *The Epistle of Karshish*. Mr Gigadibs in *Bishop Blougram's Apology*, Protos the Tyrant in *Cleon*, Abib in *The Epistle of Karshish*, are the second persons to whom the arguments are addressed. But in others like *The Bishop orders his Tomb* and *A Grammarian Funeral* this second person, to whom the arguments are addrssed, is not introduced and their dramatic interest is not the less on that account. In *the Bishop orders his Tomb* the nephews (really sons) of the dying Bishop are present before him and it is to them that his words are addressed. There is no argument, here, but dramatic alertness and movement are secured by placing the speaker in mental and emotional correpondence with the chief persons with whom he had relations in life. His dead mistress, "your tall pale mother with her talking eyes" as he describes her to his sons; his rival old Gandolf, who cozened him of his favourite niche at St. Praxed's; his sons, of whom Anselm the favourite is mentioned by name; these personalities stand in the back-ground and the mind of the speaker shoots out at many angles towards them without ever working in a fixed monotonous groove. The situation in '*A Grammarian's Funeral*, through essentially the same in point of dramatic possibilities, is made more complex by

the fact that the hero of the monologue and the speaker of it are two different persons. The hero of the poem is, of course, the grammarian; but the speaker of the monologue is his chief disciple. Thus the situation affords the poet much scope for dramatic exploitation because the speaker of the monologue not only leads the cortege to the mountain-top and gives them directions on the way but also reviews the life of the grammarian in all the glaring contrast in which it stood to that of the low people of the plain. But in *Porphyria's Lover* the speaker's mind is not studied in any degree of correspondence with characters outside himself and the dramatic interest of the poem is, necessarily, weak. The poet could easily have created some conventional relations for Porphyria; given her an aristocratic lover whose suit was favoured by her friends; pictured them as real giving men and women, and instituted a mental correspondence between them and the hero of the monologue. But in this his first attempt at a monologue, Browning does not seem to be sure of his method and leaves the social background dim and shadowy. (See notes to line 27 of the poem), Nor is the dramatic clash of motives suggested in '*while I debated what to do*', described with his usual psychological insight and skill. It will thus be seen that the dramatic interest of Browning's monologues consists largely in the mental and emotional correspondence so dexterously instituted by the poet between the leading character in the centre and the lesser personalities in the back-ground.

This creation of a definite social back-ground serves other useful purposes also. It helps the poet to keep himself apart from his creations and adopt an attitude of aloofness in sympathy which is essential if the dramatic portraiture is to have any individuality and life. When these differentiating circumstances (as they may be conveniently called, since they help the poet to distinguish himself from his creations) are absent, the characters tend to become types and their speech ceases to have any dramatic interest, because at every step we detect the poet in his creations. Rabbi Ben Ezra is an instance in point. It is valuable for its lyrical out-burst of religious passion, and not for its dramatic interest. The Rabbi does not stand out individualised before us as the Bishop of St. Praxed's or even the grammarian does; and when he enunciates his philosophy of life we feel that it is largely the poet's own. The same criticism holds good of Mr. Hardy's "*The Temporary the All.*" The general idea of the poem is that man's prevision of an ideal life is not so easy of realisation as he thinks. Disappointed by delay he accepts temporary makeshifts and excuses himself by saying "Life is roomy yet, and the odds unbounded." But the ripe time never comes and he contents himself with *aiming* at the ideal. The last stanza sums up the whole situation;

> Mistress, friend, place, aims to be bettered
> straight way,
>
> Bettered not has Fate or my hand's achieving;
> Sole the showance those of my onward earth-
> track—Never transcended;

The conception of life outlined in the above stanza is Hardy's own and it is expressed in the poem in its general application without any dramatic concreteness. But Browning's dramatic sense is so alert that he never forgets to keep himself aloof from his creations.

TAGORE'S STRAY BIRDS

By Mr. K. S. Ramaswami Sastri, B.A., B.L.,
Assistant Sessions Judge, Tanjore.

Coming down to the nearer aspects of nature, Tagore says in his poem 249 that "dark clouds become heaven's flowers when kissed by the light". In poem 72, "the widowed evening veiled with mist and rain" is described as appealing to the solitude of heart. Poem 160 describes the rain drops as earth's home-sick children coming back to mother earth—a description showing the divine points of contact between science and poesy. Poem 74 about mist describes how it hides and shows nature's beauties in the course of its spontaneous movement and play, as love's play hides and shows the beauties of the heart.

> "The mist, like love, plays upon the heart of the hills and brings out surprises of beauty".

The hurricane is thus vividly described in the course of its destructive march that makes way for itself everywhere and is finally stilled. Poem 60 says:

> "The hurricane seeks the shortest road by the no-road, and suddenly ends its search in the Nowhere".

In poem 221, the storm is described as being 'like the cry of some god in pain whose love the earth refuses', and in poem 294 'the storm of the last night', as having 'crowned this morning with golden peace'.

Coming to the phenomena of nature on earth, poem 202 about the river and the river bank contains a description which is as beautiful as it is suggestive of deeper things.

> "'I cannot keep your waves' says the bank to the river.
> 'Let me keep your foot-prints in my heart'".

In regard to trees, poem 262 says that "the trembling leaves of this tree touch my heart like the fingers of an infant child"—a beautiful idea showing to us the pure love in Nature which yearns for the pure love in the human heart. A loftier note is struck in poem 95 which says: "Be still, my heart, these great trees are prayers"—a great line recalling Coleridge's about Mont Blanc:

> "Rise, oh, ever rise
> Rise like a cloud of incense from the Earth".

Two other poems about trees, 31 and 41, should not be forgotten.

> "The trees come up to my window like the yearning loud of the dumb earth".

> "The trees, like the longings of the earth, stand a tip-toe to peep at the heaven".

A kindred idea rises like a perfume from poem 311.

> "The smell of the wet earth in the rain rises like a great chant of praise from the voiceless multitude of the insignificant".

The grass is thus tenderly and truly described:

> "Tiny grass, your steps are small, but you possess the earth under your tread".

Two beautiful poems, 83 and 104, describing the inter-relations of flower and fruit, and the summer and autumn, may well be referred to here for their suggestiveness in the realm of the spirit as for their fidelity to Nature.

" 'How far are you from me, O fruit ?'
'I am hidden in your heart, O Flower'".
"The music of the far-away summer flutters around the Autumn seeking its former rest.".

A few miscellaneous descriptions may be garnered here. Tagore says of the road: 'The road is lonely in its crowd because it is not loved'. The desert is thus described:

"The mighty desert is burning for the love of a blade of grass who shakes her head and laughs and flies away".

Poem 253 contains a wonderful description of a mountain.

"Is not this mountain like a flour with its petals of hills, drinking the sunlight?"

I shall finally refer here to the following poem about the bird song as 'the echo of the morning light back from the earth"—a description which combines in one brief phrase utter fidelity to nature and the subtle charm of suggestiveness linking up Man, Nature and God, because it kindles in our minds the image of the poet in whom the inspiration from above echoes back in song and of the saint in whom the grace of God echoes back in an ecstasy of devotion.

(*To be continued.*)

ON BOOKS AND BOOK-MEN

By 'KANTHA'

II. BOOKS.

History of England (Tamil) By G. V. Rama Iyer, B.A., L.T., 7, Pillayar Koil St., Kumbakonam.

We welcome this neat little book on the history of England written in Tamil by one of our History Assistants in one of our good schools in the Presidency. We had occasion to notice a similar production in our columns some months back. Parties that talk of want of text books in vernaculars to make the vernaculars media of instruction will be effectively silenced by the pioneer work of Rama Iyer and others. Of course, the modern Tamil may not be the classical Tamil, and Pundits have to be satisfied that it is the fate of all languages at certain stages of development. The book on hand is a short history and the young student in the Lower Secondary and High School course may be glad to know something of our countries in his own language. We wish the headmasters of schools prescribe books of the type and encourage young enterprising men of Rama Iyer type. Nothing will be too small or too big as help to enterprises of this type.

I. JOURNALS

1. '*Our Little Friend*'—One of the first class Scout Magazines we have in this part of the country. Mr. V. S. Krishna Iyer, the editor, seems to be not a mere enthusiast but an all round practical man as ambitions to be in the Scout camp as he is on the editor's chair. The May—June Number which we have pleasure to review is a neat little issue full of interesting notes on Scout matters. A special article is written on Physical Culture. That Travancore lags behind in the Scout Magazine is evident from the Extract article published from the *Travancore Daily News.* Justice Joseph Thaliath, M.A., Bar-at-Law, formerly Asst. Scout Commissioner of Cochin—now of the Travancore High Court—will certainly look to this and try to spread the scout idea in Travancore. We have pleasure in recommending this journal to all young boys and scouts of India. The paper hails from Ernaculam, S. India and the annual subscription is only Rs. 2-8-0.

The Scholar Palghat, S. India.

It is with particular pleasure we begin to review this July issue of our brilliant contemporary. After the Everyman's of (Hon. Justice) Mr V. V. Srinivasa Iyengar, the Scholar has attracted the attention of all literary men in South India. Its appeal is universal, alike to the lovers of art, science and literature. We have the pleasure to see some of our excellent contributors also have places of prominence in the Columns of our sister, and we are hopeful that the Scholar one of these days will be a first class literary journal for all India. The editors, Messrs. Subramania and Parameswara are indefatigable in their energy, and their enthusiasm for the cause is boundless and it will be nothing short of bare justice if the Scholar reaches the high place in the journalistic world fairly early. The July issue contains among others the most refreshing article '*The Tuft in Hinduism,*' a sketch of Justice Ramesam and a page from Mahatmaji's autobiography. Mr. Aghoram Iyer, the author of the article on 'Tuft', is painfully humorous and dreadfully reasonable to a very high degree, sometimes most annoying to the orthodox soul. Mr. Aghoram does not in the least stand as a champion or the explainer of the sinning Croppers, but most passionately ends his essay "Let us as products of the great Hindu Culture which has sustained and upheld this race for ages, do for the mother Church something more than the preservation of tuft. Let us not think that Hinduism is making her exit through the hair." Persons who know Aghoram know the fire underneath that breathes such impassioned sentiments. We are glad that the 'Scholar' has on its ranks contributors who feel what they say and who actually take most rational view of things. We shall be always glad to count the Scholar as one of our affectionate sisters and we shall be the first to lift our 'Hats Off' in congratulation of her achievements at all times.

Doodle. Editor—R. Balasundaram, Madras.

Mr. Balasunder with his *Doodle* is one of the pioneers in the art of caricature journalism in modern times. Mr. Sundaram has not only got the eye for the picturesque, but an instinct to strike at the weak and vital spot of individuals. Every issue is remarkably witty, most harmless yet highly fatal, most indifferent yet arrestively educative. Mr. Balu praises all, yet spares none. All bow to his killing pen. Parties and persons are finely imagined and we have our immense admiration for the extreme catholicity of the editor. *Doodle* is a remarkable contribution to the literature of this century and if years hence, the columns of the Doodle are looked into, they will portray the history of the Madras politics much better than the dry narration of an Imperial or Provincial Publicity Officer. We wish with all our heart all success to this journal, and, if we are permitted, we insist on all right—thinking men to subscribe to this weekly which is a good and enjoyable food for our leisure hours. The subscription is only Rs. 6 per year.

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2. *The Students' Own Magazine*. Editor, Shiv Dass, B.A., B.T. Lahore.

The July issue of this Punjab contemporary keeps up its normal level. Shiv Dass obviously belongs to the good old school of making students learn grammar before they embark upon other literary pursuits. We are glad that there is one at least of such type when it is looked upon with disdain in Madras with the result that several modern graduates speak and write English with absolute license re grammar. The *Students' Own* has its place—proper and legitimate in the educational world—and the Punjab Students will be the better for being subscribers and honest readers of the same. Shiv Dass is not antiquarian either in his treat to the students. There is the Scout column, there is the made easy for exam, and several good literary bits. We wish Mr. Shiv Dass all success and we shall be always glad to note our colleague's prosperity in the line he has chosen.

The Indian Thinker. Editor, N. Subramania Iyer, M.A. Trivandrum. (15—7—26).

The issue contains two interesting articles on Inter-Racial Bitterness and on Modern Cosmology. The journal has always been known for its arrestive interest and original view of points of life and things. Mr. Subramania represents one view of the Indian intellect and the truly thinking population of the East and the West may have to know a great deal from the columns of the *Indian Thinker*. It is a fortnightly with an annual susbscription of Rs. 2

The Children's News, Delhi. (June No.)

One of our well edited excellent contemporaries from North India. Its rise has been phenomenal —from a sheet to a high class monthly of over 16 pages catering to the tastes of Scouts, Literary men, school boys, and writers of short stories snd farces. 'Savitri and Satyavan' is a play that is begun to be written. It is full of interest but we would wish the writer to be more careful in his choice of language and take an original outlook of the drama. We do not wish to discourage writing dramas, but if old stories, they should be given a new touch which is authors' own, else the production will be only another of the same pattern already in the field. Dramas, the writer should know, should not be made up of statements bordering on pure morals. Deva Singh has got the knack of good literary circumspection and his tastes are faultless, but we wish he improves on our directions. The 'Story Page' is highly interesting. There are also several competitions to keep up the interest of readers.

Janopakari. Madras.

Published by the Majestic Mart, Cathedral P.O.

Janopakari within its short life has already made a name as one of our popular journals. The first volume was certainly better-working and more neatly printed. Mr. A. S. P. Iyer continues his *Baladitya* and Mr. P. V. J. Iyer, his 'Famous Strines'. The *Literary Page* and *Men of the Moment* should be better cared for and real sketches of men should be depicted and not a mere who's who which serves no good. We gladly wish our contemporary all success which it eminently deserves and we do hope that the promises it has held forth will be capable of accomplishment by the unstinted support of the reading public.

Work, Bhavanagar. (July)

This is the 3rd number of the first volume of this new monthly devoted to Technology, Handicraft and Arts. The leading article is 'How Insurance will help Unemployment' by Sir D. Drummond Fraser; a good extract from the *Times of India*. Articles on Glass Stoppers—Loosening, Glass Paper, How to Prepare Soaps, 'Ideas for Small capitalists are highly interesting and instructive. The journal is sure to be a profitable reference book for industrialists and trades. We welcome the journal into our ranks and we trust that the trading world will gladly avail itself of help rendered by the 'Work'. The annual subscription is only Rs. 2-8-0, too small for the service it does.

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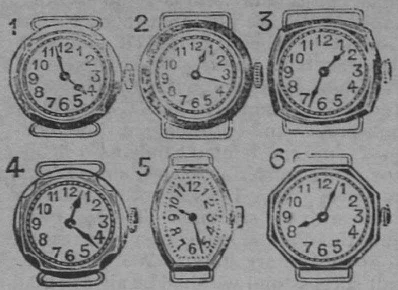

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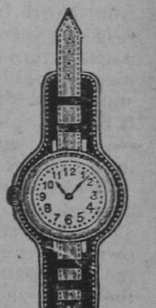

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